

# COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT

Essential Policies and Procedures for Cultural  
Institutions

# Today's Goals

- Purpose
- What's necessary
- Major components
- Implementation



- Mission Statement
- Collections Management Policy
- Collections Development
- Environmental Management Policy
- Housekeeping Policies
- Integrated Pest Management

- Maintenance Guidelines/Schedule
- Exhibition Policy
- Handling Guidelines
- Preservation Plan
- Processing/Cataloging Procedures
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan

# Why Policies and Procedures?

Standards

Formalize

Consistency

Guidance

Assign Responsibility



# AAM Code of Ethics


## Governance:

- “professional standards and practices inform and guide museum operations”
- “policies are articulated and prudent oversight is practiced”

# International Council of Museum (ICOM) Code of Ethics

## Collections Care:

“The museum should establish and apply policies to ensure that its collections (both permanent and temporary) and associated information, properly recorded, are available for current use and will be passed on to future generations in as good and safe a condition as practicable, having regard to current knowledge and resources. “



Museum policy

Library inventory and cataloging

Archives recordkeeping

+ Preservation practices

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Best Practices for Policies and Procedures for  
Collecting Institutions

# Policy

*Policies* clearly establish the standards that regulate the museum's activities. They identify what needs to be done and provide a framework to help staff make decisions. Policy statements must be approved by the governing authority.





# Procedure

*Procedures* tell the staff how to do things and provide the mechanism and details for implementing the policy. Procedures are a series of action steps that are developed at the staff level. They do not have to be approved by the governing authority.



# Policy or Procedure?

Concept	Policy	Procedure
Principles	General guidelines that regulate the institution's activities	Detailed method for performing an action
	Standard for exercising good judgment	Steps for implementing a standard as a professional practice
	Guidelines for decision-making	Protocol to follow when implementing the policy
Functions	Who, what, why	How
	Rule, standard, philosophy, guideline	Instruction, protocol, steps

# Policy or Procedure?

Concept	Policy	Procedure
Purpose	Broad philosophical statement; justification for decisions	Succinct directions for accomplishing a specific task
	What the rule is; why the rule exists; justification for the rule	Action steps necessary for implementing the rule
Nature Scope and Content	When it applies	Conditions for action and alternatives
	Whom it covers	Procedural function
	How to get help or interpretation	Instruction, protocol, steps, Direction
	Responsibility and Enforcement	Warnings; consequences

# Policy Development

- Who is responsible?
- How will decisions be made?
- Updates and revisions



# Getting Started

- Assemble policy teams
- Determine necessary policies
- Review literature and samples



# Mission Statement



# Mission Statement

A mission statement should:

- Communicate identity
- Define the purpose
- State the audience
- Role and responsibility of the institution



# Mission Statement

- CCHS is a not-for-profit educational institution whose mission is to promote an understanding of the history of Chester County and southeastern Pennsylvania by collecting, preserving, exhibiting and interpreting that history and its relationship to the region, and nation beyond, to audiences of all ages and interests.



# Mission Statements

- The Strong<sup>TM</sup> explores play and the ways in which it encourages learning, creativity, and discovery and illuminates cultural history. The Strong carries out this mission through five programmatic arms called “Play Partners.” These are the National Museum of Play, the International Center for the History of Electronic Games, the National Toy Hall of Fame, the Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play, and the *American Journal of Play*.

# Collections Management Policy



# Collections Management Policy

What is a Collections Management Policy (CMP)?

A series of policies that address collections management

Includes:

- Acquisition and Accession
- Deaccession and Disposal
- Loans
- Documentation
- Collections Care
- Access and Use
- Risk management
- Intellectual Property
- Ethics

# Collections Management Policy

## Purpose:

- Articulates professional standards
- Serves as a guide for staff
- Describes the relationship among the museum and its collections, its authorities and staff, and the outside world

# Collections Management Policy

## Statement of Purpose

- Describes the mission of the institution
- Summarizes the goals of the collections management policy

# Collections Management Policy

## Statement of Authority

- ❑ Identifies who is responsible for making collections management decisions
- ❑ Identifies who is responsible for implementing collections-related policies
- ❑ Names the individual or groups involved
- ❑ Summarizes their roles regarding the collections

# Collections Management Policy

## Scope of Collections

- ❑ Defines the purpose of the collection
- ❑ Sets agreed-upon limits that specify the subject, geographical location, and time period for the collection
- ❑ Considers the uses of a collection
- ❑ States the types of objects that will be acquired to fulfill the purposes of the collections

# Collections Management Policy

## Acquisition and Accession

### Definitions:

- Acquisition: something obtained by an institution, with or without transfer of ownership
- Accession: an acquisition that the museum formally owns and cares for by established guidelines



# Collections Management Policy

## Acquisition Policy

- ❑ Guides staff and persons interested in donating their records or papers
- ❑ Outlines conditions or terms that affect the acquisition or materials
- ❑ Defines who makes acquisition decisions
- ❑ States collections categories

# Collections Management Policy

## Acquisition Policy

### **Acquisitions may be made by:**

- ☐ Gift
- ☐ Bequest
- ☐ Purchase
- ☐ Field collections
- ☐ Conversion/Found in collections
- ☐ Transfer from within the institution

# Collections Management Policy

## Accession Policy

- Formal process used to legally accept an object and to record it as part of a collection
- Creation of a permanent record
- Calls for a unique, identifying control number to be assigned to an object, marked on the object (if possible) and used in all documentation
- Outlines how the institution obtains custody, right or title

# Collections Management Policy

## Deaccession and Disposal

### Definitions:

- ❑ Deaccession: permanent removal of previously accessioned materials from the institution's collections
- ❑ Disposal: mechanisms for disposing of collections materials that have been deaccessioned and directions for the use of proceeds

# Collections Management Policy

## Deaccession and Disposal

Outline acceptable reasons for deaccession

- ☐ Change in collections scope
- ☐ Unable to provide proper care
- ☐ New information regarding provenance or title
- ☐ Determined to be a fake or forgery

# Collections Management Policy

## Deaccession and Disposal

### Methods of disposing of deaccessioned collections materials:

- ☐ Educational, study or use collections
- ☐ Transfer to another institution
- ☐ Sale
- ☐ Physical destruction

# Collections Management Policy

## Deaccession and Disposal

“ Proceeds from the sale of nonliving collections are to be used consistent with the established standards of the museum's discipline, but in no event shall they be used for anything other than acquisition or direct care of collections.”

*AAM Code of Ethics for  
Museums*

# Collections Management Policy

## Loan Policy

### **Incoming Loans**

- ❑ Why materials may be borrowed
- ❑ Acceptable uses for borrowed materials
- ❑ Who may request materials to borrow
- ❑ Emergency conservation of damaged borrowed materials
- ❑ Packing, transportation and insurance
- ❑ Loan documentation



# Collections Management Policy

## Loans

### Outgoing Loans

- ☐ To whom the institution will make loans
- ☐ Acceptable purposes for loaned materials
- ☐ Who is responsible for approving outgoing loans
- ☐ Emergency conservation of damaged loaned materials
- ☐ Packing, transportation and insurance
- ☐ Restricting some collections materials from all loans
- ☐ Loan documentation
- ☐ Requirements of borrower
- ☐ Length of loan

# Collections Management Policy

## Documentation

Collections documentation should:

- ☐ Be clear
- ☐ Be permanent
- ☐ Be legible
- ☐ Be comprehensive

# Collections Management Policy

## Documentation

- ❑ Types of records to be kept
- ❑ How long will the information be retained
- ❑ Kinds of information recorded
- ❑ Who is responsible for keeping the records
- ❑ How often the documentation will be updated
- ❑ How frequently and where documentation will be duplicated and retained off-site.

# Collections Management Policy

## Documentation

### Types of Records

- ❑ Entry records
- ❑ Accession records
- ❑ Catalog records
- ❑ Location records
- ❑ Loan records
- ❑ Marking and labeling
- ❑ Validation/ownership records (deeds of gift, bills of sale)
- ❑ Use records (condition, exhibition, conservation)

# Collections Management Policy

## Collections Care

### **Grading**

- Determine level of care for the various portions of the collections
- Prioritizes collections care
- Allows for allocation of resources

# Collections Management Policy

## Collections Care

- ☐ Staff responsibility
- ☐ Preventive conservation
- ☐ Handling
- ☐ Conservation treatment
- ☐ Packing and shipping
- ☐ Storage environments
- ☐ Pest control
- ☐ Off-site storage
- ☐ Collections inventories

# Collections Management Policy

## Access and Use

### **Can include:**

- ☐ Who may have access
- ☐ What collections/records can be used
- ☐ How collections can be accessed
- ☐ Acceptable uses for collections
- ☐ Any restrictions

# Collections Management Policy

Access and  
Use

## **Issues to consider:**

- ☐ Physical facilities
- ☐ Staffing
- ☐ Funding and other resources
- ☐ Restrictions by donors or internal limits
- ☐ Types of collections materials
- ☐ Types of users



# Collections Management Policy

Category	Collection Use
<b>Academic researchers</b>	Research access, may include requests for destructive sampling.
<b>Commercial Users</b>	Photographers, architects, filmmakers, writers, etc. may be charged access fee.
<b>Donors</b>	May request access to determine that collections are being cared for and used appropriately.
<b>Students</b>	Access through exhibits, tours, educational programs on site.
<b>General Public</b>	Main access is through exhibitions, tours or by special request.
<b>Hobbyists</b>	Special request for particular objects or documentation.
<b>Staff</b>	Research access, use of collections and collection information for exhibits and public programs, documentation of collections care, funding narratives.
<b>Teachers</b>	Special access to prepare for student tours or educational programs on-site or in the classroom.

# Collections Management Policy

## Risk Management

- ☐ Physical defenses
- ☐ Alarm systems
- ☐ Fire detection and suppression
- ☐ Collections security
- ☐ Emergency preparedness
- ☐ Climate control
- ☐ Pest management
- ☐ Outside contractors
- ☐ Inventories

# Collections Management Policy

## Risk Management

### Insurance

- ❑ Insurance on owed or borrowed materials
- ❑ Responsibility for maintaining policy
- ❑ Records and documentation for claims
- ❑ Reporting and recording loss or damage
- ❑ What will and will not be insured

# Collections Management Policy

## Intellectual Property

- ☐ Copyright
- ☐ Trademark
- ☐ Fair Use
- ☐ Patents
- ☐ Electronic Use
- ☐ Images
- ☐ Licensing
- ☐ Reproductions
- ☐ Commercial Use
- ☐ Credit Lines
- ☐ Royalties and Fees
- ☐ Privacy

# Collections Management Policy

## Intellectual Property

### **Some policy considerations:**

- ❑ Establish that the institution owns the copyright of the requested object, image or document
- ❑ Request must be made in writing
- ❑ Single use or multiple use permitted
- ❑ Required caption and credit to the institution
- ❑ Institution receives copies of any printed materials
- ❑ Collect fees for all users; for-profit users only; or do not charge reproduction fee for any users
- ❑ Determine responsibility for obtaining copyright for reproduction if not owned by institution

# Collections Management Policy

## Ethics

- ☐ Collecting
- ☐ Conflicts of interest
- ☐ Personal collecting
- ☐ Use of personal collections
- ☐ Deaccessions
- ☐ Appraisals and authentication
- ☐ Storage of personal collections

# Collections Development Policy



# Collections Development Policy

- Conceptual framework
  - ▣ How collections support the institutional mission, interpretation, exhibitions, and programming.
- Strengths
  - ▣ Core areas that you will continue to collect
- Gaps
  - ▣ Mission-driven areas that are underrepresented



# Collections Development Policy

- Needs
  - ▣ Specify what you'd like to add to the collections
- Limits and Overlaps
  - ▣ What won't be collected
- Collecting Philosophy
  - ▣ Obtaining the materials in your needs
- Resources
  - ▣ Space, finances, staffing
- Formats

# Environmental Management Policy



# Environmental Management Policy

- Temperature
- Relative Humidity
- Light



# Environmental Management Policy

- General temperature and relative humidity guidelines
  - ▣ 70° Fahrenheit
  - ▣ 45% relative humidity
- New environmental philosophy
  - ▣ Capabilities of systems
  - ▣ Needs of the collections
  - ▣ Seasonal set-points

# Environmental Management Policy

## Lighting

- Storage: 0-5 Footcandles; 0-55 Lux
- Display/Exhibitions: 5-15 Footcandles; 55-165 Lux
- Reading/Work : 30-60 Footcandles; 330-660 Lux
- Ultraviolet Content: < 75 microwatts per lumen;  
< 2-4% UV

# Environmental Management Policy

- Environmental management team
- System capabilities
- Establish set points
- Maintenance
- Monitoring methods and protocols
- System adjustments

# Exercise 1

# Housekeeping Policy





# Housekeeping Policy

## **Housekeeping Policy/Manual**

- Contents
- Purpose
- Basic Procedure
- General Considerations
- Handling and Moving Historic Objects
- Care of Housekeeping Equipment
- Objects Being Removed from Exhibit
- Exhibit Furniture
- Panels
- Platforms
- Cases
- Staff Office and Kitchen Areas
- Housekeeping Supplies
- Basic Housekeeping Schedule
- Housekeeping Log (Master Form)

Courtesy **Fairfax County Park Authority Resource Management Division:**  
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/collections/HousekeepingManual.pdf>

## □ Historic Interiors and Collections Storage Areas:

- Room Inspection
- Ceilings
- Reproduction Light Fixtures
- Walls
- Vent Grilles
- Window Blinds and Shades
- Window Panes
- Reproduction Window Coverings and Bed Hangings
- Woodwork
- Hardware
- Fireplaces
- Floors
- Reproduction Floor Coverings
- Visitor and Door Mats

## □ Historic Objects:

- All Historic Objects
- Books
- Textiles and Reproduction Upholstery
- Wood Furniture and Objects
- Metals: Silver, Pewter, Copper, Brass, Iron, Steel and Tin
- Glass and Ceramics
- Agricultural Implements
- Framed Objects and Looking Glasses

# Housekeeping Supplies

## General Supplies :

- ☐ Brushes
- ☐ Gloves
- ☐ Muslin
- ☐ Mylar
- ☐ Orvus
- ☐ Vacuum
- ☐ Murphy's Oil Soap
- ☐ Renaissance Wax
- ☐ Dust Cloths
- ☐ Screening

List developed by the Minnesota Historical Society. Historic Housekeeping Handbook, 2000

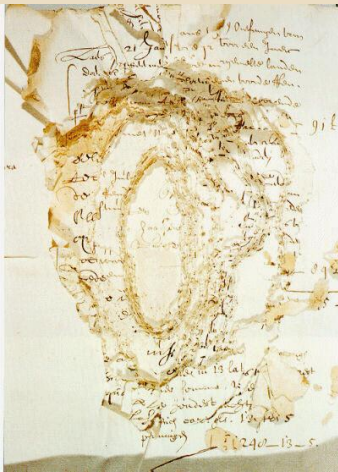
## Do Not Use:

- ☐ Lemon Oil
- ☐ Turpentine
- ☐ Beeswax
- ☐ Endust or other dusting products
- ☐ Any Aerosol products
- ☐ Saddle soap
- ☐ Cleansers
- ☐ Plexiglas cleaner on other surfaces
- ☐ Glass cleaner on Plexiglas
- ☐ Bleach
- ☐ Abrasive Cleaners
- ☐ Feather Dusters
- ☐ Acid-based Cleaners

# Integrated Pest Management Policy



# Integrated Pest Management Policy



Mouse Damage

[Insectimages.org](http://Insectimages.org)



Silverfish  
Damage

[Library.nyu.edu](http://Library.nyu.edu)



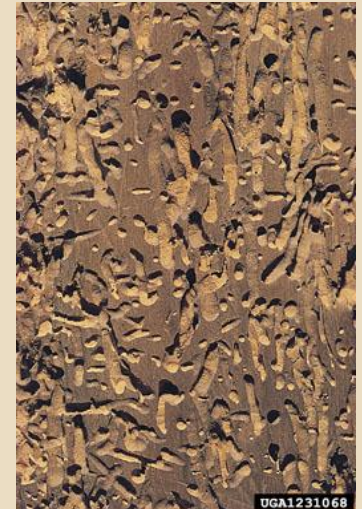
Cockroach Damage

[archives.gov.on.ca](http://archives.gov.on.ca)

Powder Post Beetle

Damage

[Insectimages.org](http://Insectimages.org)



UGA1231068

# Integrated Pest Management Policy

“Preservation professionals increasingly recommend a strategy called *integrated pest management* (IPM). **This approach relies primarily on non-chemical means (such as controlling climate, food sources, and building entry points) to prevent and manage pest infestation.** Chemical treatments are used only in a crisis situation threatening rapid losses or when pests fail to succumb to more conservative methods.”

- Beth Lindblom Patkus

# Principles of IPM

- Prevention
  - ▣ Take necessary measures to prevent the need to use chemical extermination
    - Facilities, Environment, Housekeeping
- Early Detection
  - ▣ Consistent monitoring and inspection
- Elimination
  - ▣ Take necessary actions to eliminate pests, preferably through non-chemical means



# Integrated Pest Management Policy

- Monitoring procedures
- Maintenance
- Preventive measures
- Eradication procedures
  - ▣ Building overall
  - ▣ Collections procedures



# Maintenance Guidelines and Schedule



# Maintenance Guidelines/Schedule

- ❑ Provides schedules and guidelines for inspection and preventative maintenance for any location where collections are stored
- ❑ Schedule for:
  - ❑ Annual Maintenance
  - ❑ Seasonal /Cyclical Maintenance

# Maintenance Guidelines/Schedule

## Annual Inspections

- Roofing
- Plumbing
- Electrical
- Exterior woodwork
- Exterior walls
- Doors and windows
- HVAC systems
- Security systems
- Fire Detections systems
- Fire suppression systems

# Maintenance Guidelines/Schedule

## Seasonal and Cyclical Maintenance

- Gutter and downspout cleaning
- Landscaping
- Boiler and/or air conditioning
- Snow removal
- Window cleaning

# Exhibition Policy



# Exhibition Policy

- Selection
- Length of time on display
- Light
- Support
- Security
- Housekeeping

# Exhibition Policy

- What collections materials can be exhibited
- Acceptable time periods for exhibiting materials
- Environmental, materials, coatings, mounts and furniture standards for exhibiting collections materials
- Defines who may select materials for exhibition
- Documentation of artifact condition before and after exhibition
- How collections will be secured

# Handling Guidelines





# Handling Guidelines

- Who may handle collections materials
- Necessary training
- What materials may be used around collections
- Use of gloves
- Collections transport
- Mounts for transport/use
- When materials will be restricted

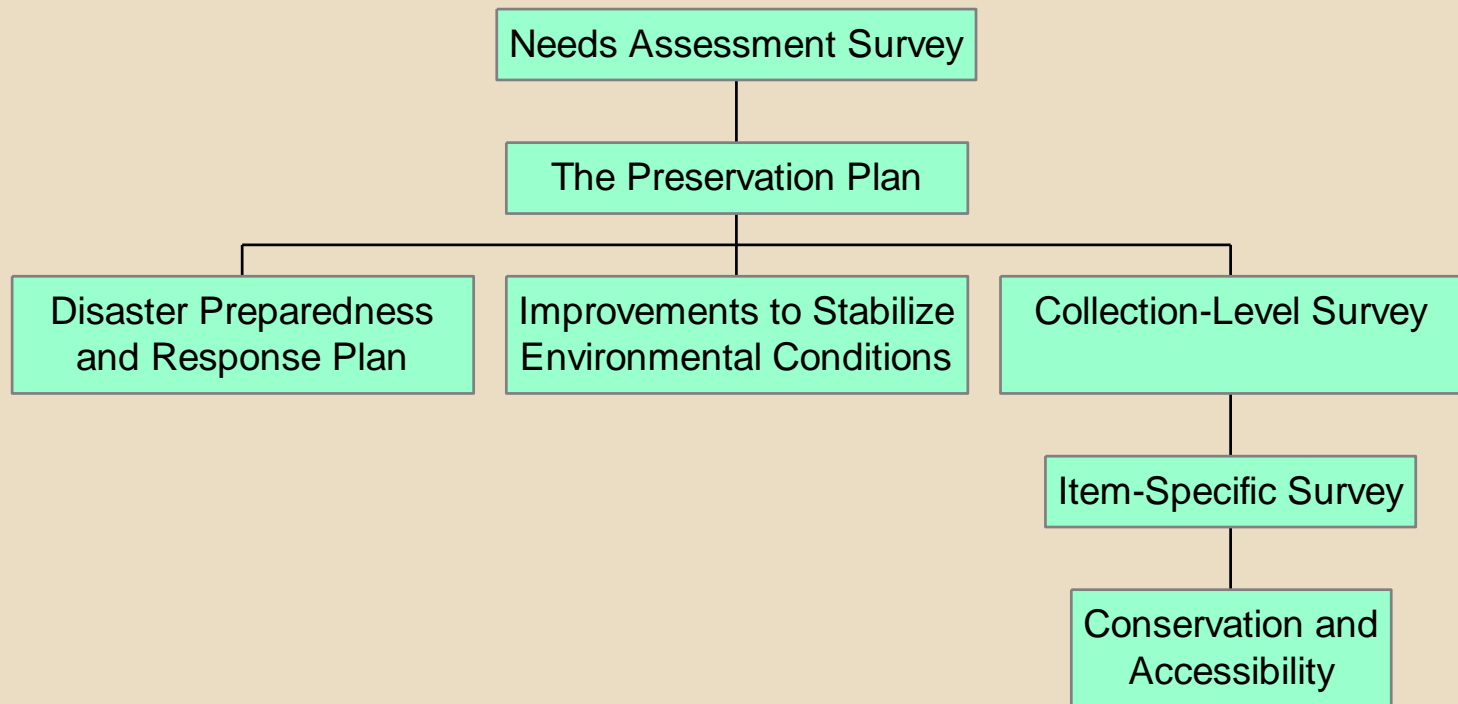
# Handling Guidelines

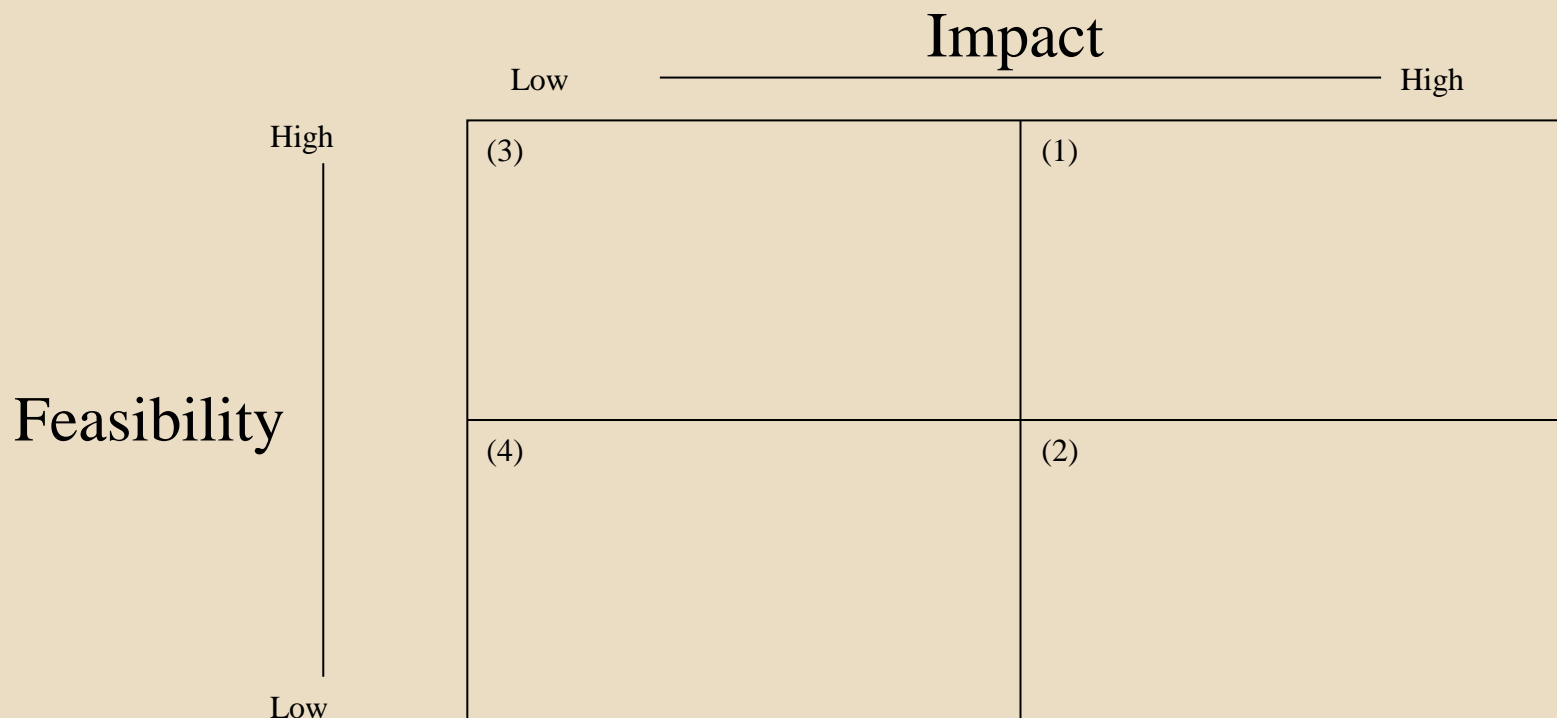
- General
- Framed works of art
- Unframed paintings
- Works of art on paper
- Sculpture
- Decorative arts and household goods
- Furniture
- Textiles
- Natural history
- Archival

# Preservation Plan



# Preservation Planning





**Impact:** extent to which the recommendation will improve the library’s preservation activities; includes activities that will result in dramatic improvement in the present condition of materials, substantial decrease in the rate of deterioration, substantial increase in efficiency of current preservation activities, or considerable savings of time, energy or money.

**Feasibility:** difficulty entailed in implementing the recommendation, particularly in terms of the time, energy and resources required to implement each recommendation.

# Preservation Plan

- Highlights of preservation activities
- Summary of collections needs
- Goals, objectives, strategies
  - Collections management
  - Environment
  - Facilities
  - Security
  - Emergency preparedness
  - Space
  - Storage
  - Exhibits
  - Individual collections

## Objective B. To have all necessary policies and procedures in place to manage the collections

### Strategies

	Detail	Timeframe	Staff Lead	Desired Outcome	Completion Date
B.1	Develop criteria for acquisition and retention of collections materials	October 2007 (as part of the collections management policy)		Only those collections materials that relate to the mission of ***** are accepted as donations and are retained in the collections	
B.2	Develop procedures for accessioning and deaccessioning collections materials	October 2007 (as part of the collections management policy)		All Board members, staff, and volunteers have clear guidelines for accessioning and deaccessioning materials from the collections	
B.3	Develop policies and procedures regarding incoming and outgoing loans	October 2007 (as part of the collections management policy)		All incoming and outgoing loans are fully approved and documented.	
B.4	Develop a collecting plan	January 2008		A plan that lays a framework for future collecting at *****	
B.5	Develop and reference and reproduction policy for the library.	October 2007		Reference and reproduction services are guided by institutional policy.	

# Other Policies/Procedures

- Processing/cataloging procedures
- Emergency preparedness and response plan
- Rights and reproductions policy



# Policy Review

## **Policy revisions are needed when:**

- ☐ The policy is inadequate
- ☐ The policy no longer accomplishes its intended purpose
- ☐ Professional standards change
- ☐ New professional standards are recognized
- ☐ The institution's mission changes
- ☐ The institution changes its collections plan
- ☐ The institution initiates new programs or activities that raise new policy issues

**An annual review by collections staff is recommended in the absence of a formal review process**

# Final Exercise



Laura Hartz Stanton  
Director of Preservation Services  
Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts  
264 S. 23<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
(215)545-0613  
[lhartzstanton@ccaha.org](mailto:lhartzstanton@ccaha.org)